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ISSUE 282 JANUARY 2015
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Naomi Klein
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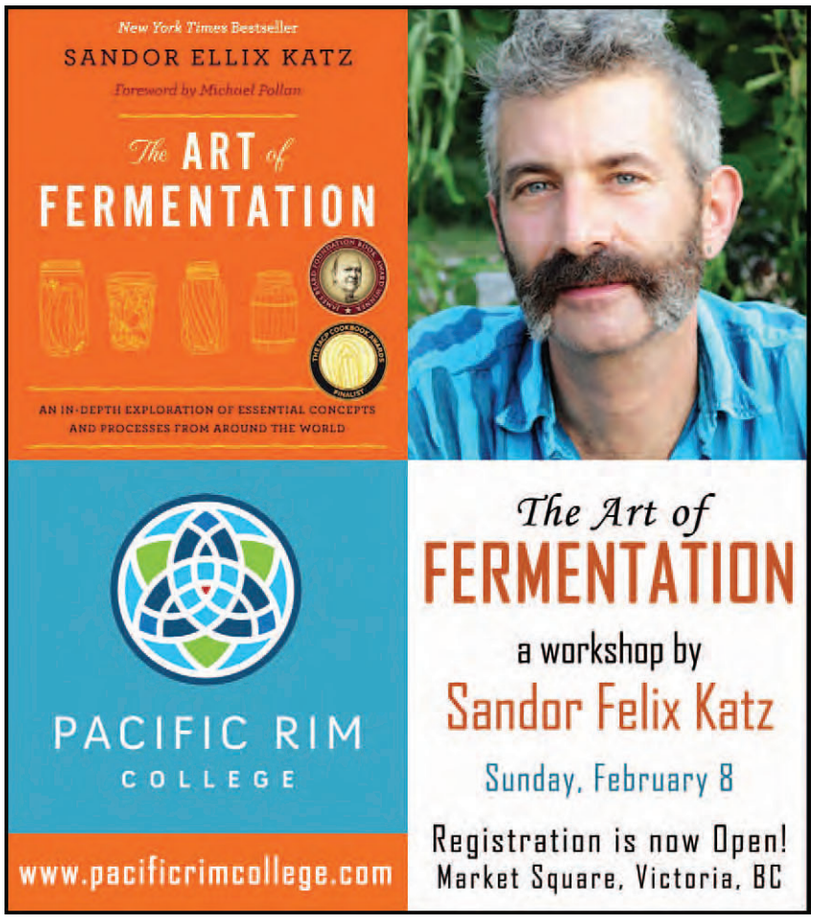
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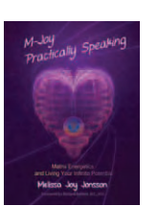

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Ralph Maud
1928-2014

photo by Anick Violette

Ralph Maud, one of the founding English professors at Simon Fraser University in 1965, became an authority on the work of Dylan Thomas, Charles Olson and the ethnographers of the Pacific Northwest.

Born on December 24, 1928, Ralph Maud was an iconoclastic professor and eccentric pamphleteer who died on December 8, 2014.

As one of the founding English professors at Simon Fraser University in 1965, Ralph Maud became an authority on the work of Dylan Thomas, Charles Olson and the ethnographers of the Pacific Northwest. He was born on December 24, 1928. He died on December 8, 2014.

"Ralph Maud could write, because he knew that all writing constituted a translation of (a) story," says his friend and main B.C. publisher Karl Siegler. "He thought of writing as a kind of verbal notation–like a score is both a guide to and a record (pun intended) of a musical performance. That's why he was so interested in acts and circumstances of the first written versions of oral histories, and why he loved Charles Olson so much: from the heart to the breath to the line… He will be missed."

"Ralph supported our publishing endeavours and authors' efforts in many ways besides the books he wrote and edited for us," recalls current Talonbooks publisher Kevin Williams. "He worked behind the scenes to help people their career and with their projects.

"He was a demanding taskmaster though: as Geoff Hargreaves commented, 'He was a scholar of uncompromising rectitude.' He had legendary energy and fought the good fight, political and literary, to his last day. His classes were legendary as was his desire to be a bookseller."

Ralph Maud's research into original source material led him to edit and revive the work of pioneer ethnographer Charles Hill-Tout for a four-volume collection, *The Salish People* (Talonbooks, 1978), representing Hill-Tout's fieldwork from 1895 to 1911. It is divided by geographical and cultural areas: Volume I: The Thompson and the Okanagan; Volume II: The Squamish and the Lillooet; Volume III: The Mainland Halkomelem; Volume IV: The Sechelt and the South-Eastern Tribes of Vancouver Island.

This research let Maud to produce *A Guide to B.C. Indian Myth and Legend* (Talonbooks, 1982). Twice reprinted, this highly opinionated panorama of what Maud terms "mythography, the study of how a people's oral traditional literature becomes available to us in published form," amounts to a third- or fourth-year university survey course in which he grades the various sources of Aboriginal literature prior to the 1980s, usually in accordance with his own perception of their degree of sophistication. "I will not be telling the history of myth-collecting in British Columbia without bias," Maud admits.

Whereas Maud praised the elements of Victorian melodrama in a translation by Charles Hill-Tout "because Hill-Tout is trying to meet fully the melodrama of the original," Maud denigrates the Victorian English translations of the Sepass Tales as "hardly satisfying to the modern reader as verse." Maud suggests Hill-Tout's naïveté was a virtue when he began his work, witnessing the performance of the blind historian Mulks in North Vancouver, and he states "the most readable body of Native literature in the canon" was gathered in 1896 by Hill-Tout from the "brilliant" Chief Mischelle of Lytton. Mischelle's version of the Transformer Story appears in Volume I of *The Salish People*.

"Maud has approached aspects of his topic with a certain insouciant bias," observed reviewer Andrea Laforet of the National Museum of Man, "which can make what he has written not only superficial but also unjust. This is particularly true in the case of Franz Boas." *A Guide to B.C. Indian Myth and Legend* is nonetheless a groundbreaking and engaging work, inviting the lay reader into the highly specialized and mostly academic-dominated field of myth collection.

Edited by Ralph Maud, *The Porcupine Hunter and Other Stories* (Talonbooks, 1993) is a collection of Henry W. Tate's stories in Tate's original English, which grew out of Maud's survey of Franz Boas' Tsimshian work published as an article, "The Henry Tate-Franz Boas Collaboration on Tsimshian Mythology" in American Ethnologist.

Ralph Maud's *Transmission Difficulties: Franz Boas and Tsimshian Mythology* (Talonbooks, 2000) expands on the relationship between Henry Tate and Franz Boas and the problematic methodologies of their transcriptions. Between 1903 and 1913, Tate acted as an informant, recounting stories of Tsimshian mythology in letters to Boas that amounted to two thousand pages of text. "Tate, on his part, was a 20-cent-a-page man, a piece-worker," Maud writes. Instead of faithfully transcribing stories told by elders, Tate wrote the stories in English first before translating them into Tsimshian. In the process he minimized sexual elements in deference to his Christianity *continued p.5…*

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Publisher & Senior Editor - Joseph Roberts
Managing Editor - Sonya Weir
Advertising Sales - Adam Sealey

Design & Production - www.perubluesky.ca
Proofing - Cara Colceugh

Contributors:
Robert Alstead, Alan Cassels, David Christopher, Lari Laurikkala, Bruce Mason, Mac McLaughlin, Tom Mulcair, Geoff Olson, Peter Ormesher, Nancy Prokosh, Gwen Randall-Young, Lucy Sharratt, David Suzuki, Eckhart Tolle, J-M Toriel

Contact Common Ground:
Head office 604-733-2215
Toll-free 1-800-365-8897 Fax: 604-733-4415

Advertising: Adam Sealey
adam@commonground.ca

Editorial: editor@commonground.ca
datebook@commonground.ca
classifieds@commonground.ca

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There is a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in.
- Leonard Cohen

The politics of the **Zero Carbon Age** are overtaking the weary **Carbon Age** as sure as the sun rises every day. There are greedy forces in control of mass media, the military and wealth; and politicians, in their economic myopia ignore the inconvenient truth. But awareness is dawning all around, and the forces of light, love and life demand a transition to a renewable non-toxic life-affirming world. We stand at the cross roads. The fossil energy control freaks are doing their darnedest to maintain control. Harper and his pro oil renegades are trying to mold Canada into a petrol state to serve the petroleum finance corporate privateers. We who stand for the Earth will persevere, as surely as the sun rises.

...**Ralph Maud** *from p.22*

and sometimes mixed his sources.

Boas, for his part, did not properly identify his source—his co-author—referring to Tate only as a "full-blood Indian of Port Simpson, British Columbia." According to Maud, both men severely compromised the integrity of Tsimshian culture. "If only Boas had not been so uptight. If only he had been more forthright from the start and stated emphatically, 'Listen Mr. Tate. You don't get another red cent from me until I know exactly what you are doing, what you are filching from the texts I sent you, what you are writing off the top of your head and what are the real goods, the exact words of the old storytellers you know. And stop writing these pieces in English first, or no more money orders.'"

Ralph Maud also edited *The Chilliwacks and Their Neighbors* (Talonbooks, 1987) by Oliver Wells and he was a contributing editor to *Coast Salish Essays* by Wayne Suttles.

Ralph Maud grew up in Yorkshire, England, and obtained his B.A. and Ph.D degrees from Harvard. While teaching in Buffalo, he published an edition of T*he Notebooks of Dylan Thomas* from manuscripts in the university library. His books pertaining to Dylan Thomas are *Entrances to Dylan Thomas' Poetry* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), *Dylan Thomas in Print* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970), and new editions of *Collected Poems* (Dent, 1995) and *Under Milkwood* (Dent, 1988), both co-edited with Walford Davies. He taught at the Dylan Thomas School in Wales and he got to know poet Charles Olson during a two-year stint at the State University of New York at Buffalo, where Olson was also a staff member.

Maud became involved in efforts to restore Charles Olson's house at 28 Fort Square, Gloucester, Massachusetts, as a research centre for Olson studies. As an Professor Emeritus of English, he engaged in editing a collection of Charles Olson's letters. Also edited by Ralph Maud, *Poet to Publisher: Charles Olson's Correspondence with Donald Allen* (Talonbooks, 2004) recalls the story behind *The New American Poetry* (Grove, 1960), an influential anthology edited by Allen.

In 2008, Talonbooks released Maud's "reactive" biography of Charles Olson in part as an attempt to remove the harm Maud believes was done to Olson's image by Tom Clark's *Charles Olson: The Allegory of a Poet's Life* (Norton, 1991). Having taught the poetry of Charles Olson at least one semester every year from 1965 to 1994, Maud depicted Olson in *Charles Olson at the Harbor* (Talonbooks, 2008) as a man possessing great genius, a successful Melville scholar, and a lasting influence on the world of poetry. "The situation I find myself in is somewhat akin to James Boswell's," Maud wrote, because Boswell undertook his famous biography of Samuel Johnson to repudiate a preceding biographer.

In 2010, Maud marked the centenary of Charles Olson's birth with a revised, second edition of *Muthologos*, the poet's collected lectures and interviews. The new compilation included five pieces not part of the 1978 edition.

Co-edited by Sharon Thesen and Ralph Maud, *After Completion: The Later Letters of Charles Olson and Frances Boldereff* (Talonbooks, 2014) follows from an earlier edition of their letters, *A Modern Correspondence* (Wesleyan University Press 1999), that spanned three years and more than three hundred letters. Charles Olson had many correspondents, but Frances Boldereff, a book designer and typographer, Joyce scholar, and single working mother, was muse, lover, and critic to Olson. *A Modern Correspondence* concludes with a crisis at the end of their physical relationship. After 1950, Boldereff would no longer believe so whole-heartedly in Olson's work—or his promises to spend time with her. After Completion picks up the correspondence post-crisis and covers approximately 140 letters written between 1950 and 1969.

The article on Ralph Maud was originally published in BC BookWorld and BC BookLook. Visit http://www.abcbookworld.com//view_author.php?id=843.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of the suddenness of Ralph's departure, many people have not had adequate time to collect their thoughts and write in so there will be more on our friend Ralph Maud in Common Ground's next edition . Please send in your memories, to joseph@commonground.ca. Also plans for a celebration of Ralph's life may be taking form both here and in Wales.

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The "12 Principles of Don't Pay"

A New Year's manifesto in the war on prescription drug waste

Thirty-six billion dollars is a lot of money.

That's roughly what we Canadians will spend on prescription drugs this year. How big is that number? Let's see: by the end of the day on January 1st, we'll have sent $100 million to the drug companies. Then on January 2nd, we'll send them another $100 million. And again on January 3rd. In fact, we'll do this every single day until December 31st, 2015. That is roughly $36 billion worth of drugs. Wow.

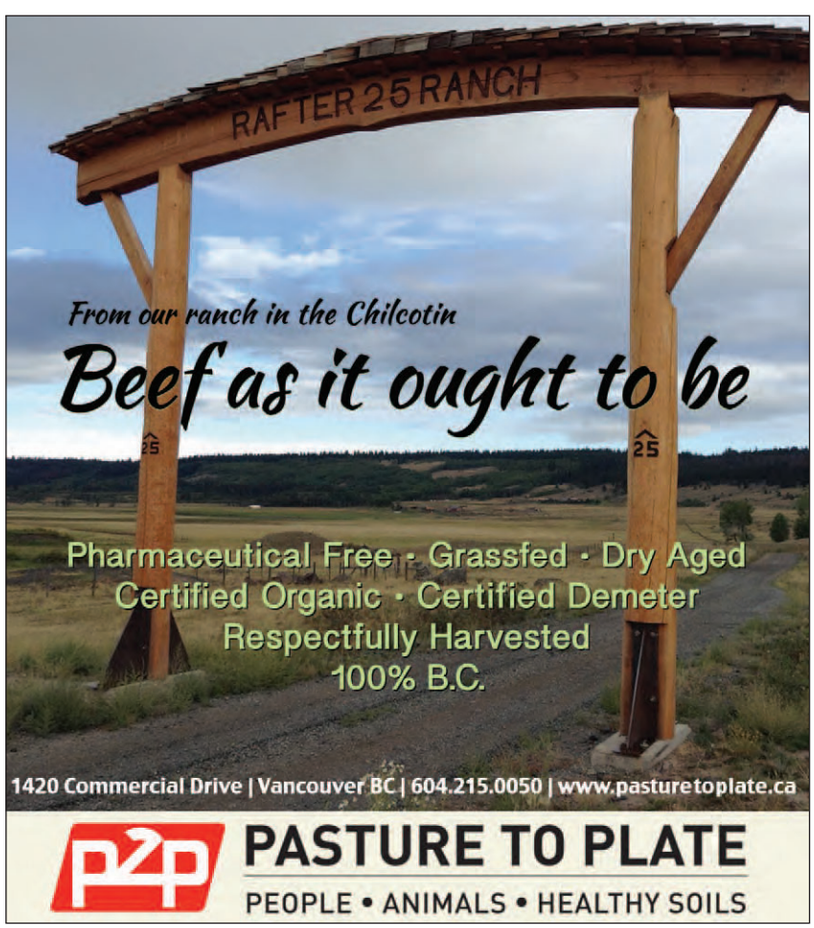
Where does the $100 million per day come from? Well, roughly $30 million comes directly from our wallets, $30 million comes out of our employers' wallets and $40 million comes from public drug plans, largely paid from provincial taxes. While we might love the 'free' pharmaceuticals we get through our provincial drug plan or our employer-sponsored private insurance, don't fool yourself; either way, there is no free lunch. Every single dollar we spend collectively on prescription drugs is one dollar we don't have for something else.

While there are many effective drugs and we should be glad we have them, the healthcare dollars they gobble up are very unequal. Health spending that goes to doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, midwives and other people delivering medical care and community facilities, such as hospitals, clinics and hospices, is money that stays in our communities, recirculates and enriches local economic activity. Money that goes to drug companies? Well, those bucks are exported, mostly to big multinational corporations based in places like Switzerland or New York or to generic companies in eastern Canada. Relatively small bits of drug money stay in our communities and generate some economic activity, especially in pharmacies.

Yet I wonder how many people are aware that the $100 million we spend every day involves gargantuan waste. Recently, some colleagues and I published a study where we looked very closely at how decisions get made on drug benefits in the private sector. The most telling feature of private drug plans – those drug benefits you get through your employer – is how utterly wasteful they are, often paying for higher-cost drugs that are no more effective and sometimes less safe than lower cost drugs. We found that private drug plans in Canada waste more than half the total drug bill paid through private drug insurance. The key thing is that many of the decision makers at the table – insurers, consultants, drug companies and pharmacies – want to keep drug use high to generate profits and satisfy shareholders.

Reducing waste in drug spending, therefore, seems to me an attractive goal, especially if any savings could be redirected to things that actually make us healthier. My friend, Dr. Trevor Hancock, is a professor at the University of Victoria's School of Public Health and Social Policy and we met over a decade ago when he worked at the BC Ministry of Health. If you asked him what he did every day, he would say he spent most of his time banging his head against the wall promoting "population health," which is all about creating social, economic and environmental conditions that make people healthy. In an article he wrote for the local Victoria paper in mid-December, he said, "If we ask people what makes them healthy, they don't talk very much about the health-care system. They talk about having healthy food and good housing, being active and engaged, having good relationships with and support from family and friends, being happy at work."

In my naïve way of thinking, we need to pay for essential, important and sometimes lifesaving medicines, but at the same time, we need to get serious about eliminating waste from the $100 million daily stream going to drug companies. Paraphrasing John F. Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you…" let's say, "Ask what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you can do for your health care system (in reducing the waste in the drug bill). As a citizen, an employee or taxpayer, let me suggest the "12 Principles of Don't Pay."

1. Don't pay for higher cost drugs when there are lower cost drugs that are equally as effective. Are you taking a brand name drug when a generic version exists? Stop paying what I call the "Drug Tax of the Uninformed." Are you taking Lipitor instead of generic atorvastatin, Plavix instead of clopidogrel? The difference between a branded drug and a generic might be as much as $3 per day.

2. Don't pay for the newest, most shiny drug when there is an older, safer equivalent. Compared to the newest whiz-bang drugs for hypertension or cardiac failure, drugs such as thiazide diuretics and good old digoxin are effective, cheaper and probably safer.

3. Don't pay for useless drugs. Ever heard of Ezetrol? There is zero evidence that this so-called cholesterol booster will do anything to extend the quality and length of your life. It will, however, drain your bank account.

4. Don't pay for drugs with black box warnings if there are alternatives. You might want to avoid drugs that carry the most serious warning issued about a drug. Are you taking Celebrex? It has a black box warning and there is a very good chance your arthritis could be controlled with something safer and likely cheaper. If you want to know if your drug has a black box, ask Dr. Google.

I wonder how many people are aware that the $100 million we spend every day involves gargantuan waste.

5. Don't pay for drugs that have no proof they will actually help you. The newest drugs for type II diabetes, the so-called DPP-4 inhibitors, which include drugs like Januvia, Onglyza and Trajenta, might lower your blood sugars, but there is zero evidence they improve the quality and length of your life.

6. Don't pay for drugs that are likely to make a patient feel worse even if it makes your doctor or caregiver feel better to give it to you. The best examples are drugs for Alzheimer's, such as Aricept (donepezil) and Exelon (rivastigmine).

7. Don't pay for prescription-only drugs when there are equally effective over-the-counter drugs. Which is to say, if you're worried about having a stroke, clopidogrel (Plavix) is maybe 10 times as expensive as ASA (aspirin), but considered equal in effectiveness.

8. Don't pay for drugs that are likely to lead to additional problems, thus requiring more drugs to deal with the side effects of the drugs you're currently taking. Taking drugs for side effects of other drugs always strikes me as counter-productive. If those side effects are troubling, try to stop or switch to something more agreeable, under the guidance of your doctor, of course.

9. Don't pay for drugs when there are equally effective non-drug alternatives. Instead of SSRIs, for mild to moderate depression – i.e. Paxil, Effexor or Zoloft – there is good evidence that cognitive behavioural therapy and increased physical activity work for many people, without the baggage, potential for side effects, addictive properties and expense of antidepressants.

10. Don't pay for drugs if they haven't been tested or approved for the disease you have. This is called "off-label" prescribing and means the drug may or may not help, but we're not really sure because the regulator has not approved the drug for the reason you're taking it.

11. Don't pay for drugs out of ignorance. If you don't know how long you need to take them, the signs that tell you they're 'working' or their addiction potential, ask more questions. And question the answers.

12. Don't pay for drugs when you're already taking too many. What's too many? There is no hard and fast rule. Anything over five and it's time to start asking some hard questions because as we all know, more drugs, more potential for drug harm.

With our health system looking like it's always on the verge of economic collapse, it's great that at least in one sector – prescription drug use – our governments and we citizens can really exercise that muscle of not paying more for prescription drugs than we need to. You've got 12 months ahead of you; take those principles out for a test ride and see how well they serve you and your wallet.

Alan Cassels researches pharmaceutical policy, writes about drugs and works to advise unions and employers on rational, cost-effective drug use. You can read more of his writings at www.alancassels.com

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Tea for the joy and health of it

by Nancy Prokosh

photo © Monika Adamczyk

Obesity is increasing and the need to shift towards disease prevention is an imperative. Mass merchandisers and pharmaceutical companies promote their commodities as the "antidote," however, most of those antidotes do not have a history and the real winners are the companies' bank accounts.

On the other hand, tea has been around since 2737 BCE when Chinese emperor Shennong was boiling water to drink and the leaves of a tea plant fell into his pot. The emperor found the taste quite refreshing and from that day, tea has become a very common drink. Today, tea is the most consumed staple drink in the world. It is estimated tea production in 2013 was worth 15.4 billion, growing at an average rate of 15% yearly.

Tea helps people lose weight, relaxes the mind, prevents heart disease and reduces cholesterol. It has been proven to cure and prevent many diseases such as cancer, diabetes, dementia and oral disease. A typical cup of brewed green tea contains between 80 and 100 milligrams of polyphenols with the catechin EGCG – a type of natural phenol – accounting for about 25 to 30 milligrams.

In their research at the Aichi Cancer Institute in Japan, doctors Nakane and Ono found that catechin in green tea can inhibit the activity of the AIDS virus. With further research, there is a slight hope that a treatment consisting of green tea and other components may combat the now unstoppable virus.

A renowned Japanese professor, Mr. Shimamura, discovered that the catechin and theaflavin found directly in black tea have a very strong effect on the influenza virus. He confirmed gargling with black tea helps suppress the risk of contracting the flu. Gargling at least once a day with black tea is recommended in order for it to have an effect.

Immunity boosting purple tea

Purple tea is a new tea with remarkable health benefits. This rare gem is grown on limited tea farms in Mt. Kenya and is considered to be an immunity-boosting beverage. The Tea Research Foundation of Kenya has pre-released a purple tea variety targeting a unique tea compound known as anthocyanins. This clone has been under development for the past 25 years and further in-depth research is continuing on the antioxidant value. Anthocyanins are very high in flavonoids, which are soluble in water and offer powerful health enhancing properties. If you want the simple pleasure of drinking tea while simultaneously boosting your health, purple tea is the best possible choice.

Purple tea was thought to have first originated in Tocklai, Assam. This unique tea contains exceptionally high levels of catechins and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) – confirmed to reduce body fat and obesity and prevent many diseases – and an excess of antioxidants, which help to fight free radicals in the human body. It also reduces hypertension and lowers the risk of cardiac arrests.

Unlike black tea, this clone has very high purple pigmentation in the leaves and after steeping has an obvious purple hue. Its powerful health benefits and fantastic flavour are creating hope around boosting economic revenue in Africa. This exclusive new leaf is high yielding, grows in almost any region and is frost, disease and pest resistant. Negotiations are continuing with pharmacological companies.

Ginger tea a health trend in 2014

One of my favourite things was finding out drinking ginger tea was one of the biggest and healthiest trends in 2014.

The health benefits from ingesting ginger have been recognized for over two thousand years. The legendary healing powers are highly valued by medical traditions in India, Tibet, Japan and China. Ginger originally grew and was discovered in East Asia. Today, it is available throughout many tropical regions including the West Indies and South Pacific.

Ginger is rated as a safe herb with almost zero side effects. It helps the human body in so many ways and is the least costly cure for many ailments. It can be purchased inexpensively at your local grocery store. Research was conducted at Georgia State University that proved this herb can destroy cancerous agents and cells. Ginger tricks cancerous cells into destroying each other and stops the growth of more cancerous cells.

Natural, organic ginger candies suppress nausea, vomiting and motion sickness and fresh ginger root is a great remedy for colds, flu, headaches and winter chills.

In their research at the Aichi Cancer Institute in Japan, doctors Nakane and Ono found that catechin in green tea can inhibit the activity of the AIDS virus.

Organic tea

I have been an importer and handler of certified organic tea since 2000. My attraction with tea began as a youngster and grew much deeper over the years. Knowledge of organic tea – its quality and where it is grown and processed – has become my priority. From the four corners of the world and for generations, organic tea has adapted to the needs of people and in some countries it is the staple drink. Plantations that continue to grow tea leaves with pesticide residue are slowly depleting, as consumers grow more health conscious and unwilling to settle for secondary tea.

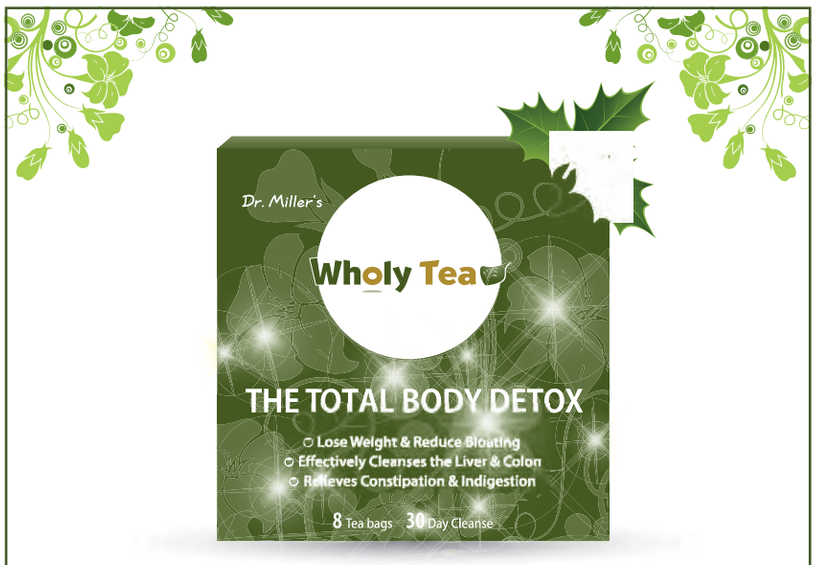
Today's organic tea is imported from India, Assam, China, Japan and South Africa and is compliant with EU guidelines. We ensure that the organic tea is not tampered with and is flavoured only with natural flavours and free from pesticides and insecticides as well as being cultivated on organic land. Many organic tea growers have found improved soil fertility, balanced mineral deficiencies and a balanced pH level eliminates leaf blister and various other plant diseases and insects, which could not be managed through chemical methods.

We believe organic tea is changing the face of medicine through naturopathic, homeopathic and integrative medicine, with the quality of life being enhanced and extended. Through mind, body, dietary, nutritional and therapeutic treatments, healing occurs with organic tea.

Take time out

Despite our over-scheduled lifestyles and a culture obsessed with instant gratifications, the ceremony of tea drinking has managed to remain an art form – a solace, a refuge and a warm, creative comfort that transcends the passage of time. What began as a mid-afternoon refreshment grew into an elite social activity confined to aristocracy, but it has always offered the means by which to spiritually recharge. Hope, resolve and calm contemplation can be found in a warm cup of tea. There is a time to reflect, relax and nurture friendships when we finally slow down and sip.

Nancy Prokosh is a tea professional with a keen interest in health and wellness. Her lifelong goal is to inspire others to live well and drink tea, one cup at a time. www.TealiciousTeaCompany.com, cell/text: 604-377-5789, Skype: nancyprokosh



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The Great Shift Forward

the quiet transportation revolution

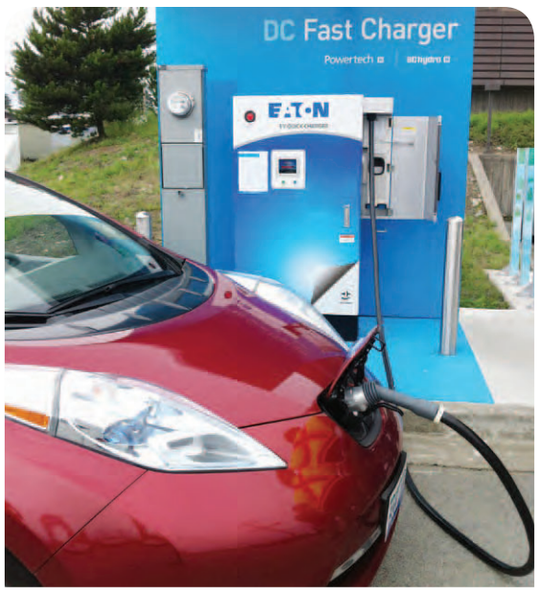
by J-M Toriel

2015 is the year to release addiction to oil and embrace a low carbon life.

The world is on the cusp of a renewable energy revolution and Canadians *are* participating. The 10,000th electric car is about to be purchased in Canada this month. Despite the recent elimination of a $5,000 rebate for electric powered vehicles (EVs) in the last provincial budget, plenty are plugging into a cleaner future while our governments remain idle.

It's time to take part in the "Great Shift Forward" – a critical time in our collective history where we abandon "fossilfuelishness*"* for a cleaner energy future. As long as we stay tethered to our internal combustion engines, Big Oil pundits and lobbyists have a point when they say we all *"need"* them. Many people remain uncertain, but here's why switching to an EV makes sense.

There's a quiet revolution happening in the world of transportation and not just in the emergence of EVs like the Tesla Model S, BMW i3, Nissan Leaf or plug-in hybrids like the GM Volt. Electricity is being used not only to provide propulsion for cars and Skytrains, but there is now greater access to electric vehicle charging stations throughout BC; there are now about 1,000 240V public chargers. See plugshare.com.



There are currently 1,000 electric vehicle charging stations throughout BC.

Canada is a laggard in green policies for transportation, which accounts for 31% of our energy use and 37% of greenhouse gas emissions. The true cost of conventional gas vehicles is heavily externalized. Electric Mobility Canada states that, at $25 per tonne, EVs would save society around $2,500 per vehicle per year thanks to the difference in emissions between internal combustion engines (ICE) and their electric counterparts.

By examining the entire energy value chain from "well to wheels," a captivating fact emerges. Typical internal combustion vehicles convert 30% of the energy into traction and the rest of the energy is lost as heat. In contrast, electric motors convert 90%. On the basis of efficiency alone, EVs are in a category of their own, with most achieving MPG equivalence surpassing 100 – about three times the average and 1/10th the cost to operate and maintain.

Besides opposing pipeline projects and driving less, another way to stand against fossilfuelishness is to stop driving ICE cars.

Here are five reasons why you should set the intent to buy an electric vehicle as your next car:

1. Efficiency: EVs use about 1/10th of a "fuel efficient" internal combustion car. Electric motors transfer 90% of their battery power to the wheels, losing very little energy as waste heat and they have no tailpipes.

2. Clean grid: Here in BC, electricity comes from renewable sources so electric vehicles release 97% less greenhouse gas emissions than their ICE counterparts.

3. Charging on-the-go: Most EV drivers charge conveniently at home, but with 1,000 charging stations throughout the province and high-speed – 80% in 20 minutes – DC chargers, you can drive electric with greater confidence.

4. Stick it to Big Oil: They're down, but not out. You can help further reduce demand.

5. Greater peace and security: Hostilities in the Middle East, expansion of the tar sands, infrastructure (like pipelines), rail accidents (like the Lac-Mégantic rail disaster), air pollution, lung conditions like asthma associated with tailpipe emissions, increased numbers of tankers along our coastlines, potential colossal oil spills and staggering price fluctuations are all related to our dependence on fossil fuels.

Start off the New Year with a test drive.

J-M Toriel, MBA, is a director of the Vancouver Electric Vehicle Association (veva.ca) and president of Big Green Island Transportation, which provides EV charging solutions with consulting and installation services. www.biggreenisland.com

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Mushrooms
good medicine

by Lari Laurikkala

Lari Laurikkala from Four Sigma Foods with some big reishi mushrooms.

We have all seen some funny looking mushrooms growing in the forest, but the parts we see account for only a tiny fraction of how big the fungi really are. Underground, the fungi spread their mycelium web to recycle dead animal and plant matter. About 90% of the world's plants rely on fungi and the mycelium is what keeps the soil together. Those parts that pop out of the ground are called fruiting bodies and within them are some special powers.

The best mushrooms are among the safest medicinal foods, with benefits for humans ranging from enhanced physical performance to hormonal balance. At one time, they were worth their weight in silver – for a reason.

Meet medicinal mushrooms

The Asians have used mushrooms in their daily lives for thousands of years. They are present in the west as well even though we're a bit behind the scenes. The so-called medicinal mushrooms have given us many important pharmaceutical medicines, including penicillin and the first statin drugs and anti-cancer treatments. Today, about 40% of western medicine utilizes mushrooms.

So could drinking a tea made out of a specific mushroom lower your stress levels? Or could topping your risotto with champions help prevent you from developing cancer? Out of the 150,000 known species of fungi, about 300 have shown a wide variety of medicinal properties. Some "shrooms" have a hormonal balancing effect while some enhance the immune system, just to give a couple of examples.

Two mushroom species that must be mentioned at the outset are chaga and reishi, also called the king and queen of the mushrooms. Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*) strengthens the body's own immune system and helps with fighting against viruses and bacteria. Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) produces a calming effect on the mind and nervous system. Others with a very long track record include Lion's Mane (*Hericium erinaceus*), Cordyceps (Ophiocordyceps sinensis) and shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*).

To adapt is to thrive

In addition to all the other amazing benefits, our favourite medicinal mushrooms are also classified as adaptogens. The term adaptogen means that the substance helps the body adapt to challenging conditions. It directs people to relax when they are under too much stress and, on the other hand, increases energy for those with low energy levels.

They are often also highly regarded as being immunomodulators, substances capable of strengthening an under-active immune system and down-regulating excessive immune system response. Extensive research on the chemistry, pharmacology and therapeutic benefits of these mushrooms has all come to the same conclusion: there is some inherent intelligence in the "shrooms."

How to take them

It could be said that culinary mushrooms are an aid to health, but medicinal mushrooms are magic. Thus, even including some edible mushrooms in your meals every week will provide a huge benefit. So look for a mushroom that has the greatest attraction for you and find a reputable producer for it. You could run to a forest and pick your own, but we can't stress enough that you have to be sure about your identification before eating anything from the wild.

There are a few tricks that have to happen first to achieve the best possible benefits from any of the mushrooms. Most of the medicinal mushrooms grow on trees and are fibrous and woody and if you only powder them, the digestive system cannot break down the medicinal compounds. By boiling the mushrooms, their cell walls break apart and the beneficial stuff becomes bioavailable.

Making a strong tea, also known as an extract, is the most effective way to feel the power. It is also worth noting that some of the active components are fat-soluble and therefore require a bit more effort to extract. At home, you could put the mushroom pieces or powders into a vodka bottle and wait two weeks for all the good stuff to dissolve. When both water-soluble and-fat-soluble compounds are taken out, it is called dual extraction and that's how you get the most bang for your buck.

As the whole kingdom of fungi has been susceptible to some food racism in the past, we want people to see and feel what they can get from all these funky little mushrooms. Our strong belief is that, no matter what diet you prefer, you will receive increased health benefits from introducing a few top mushrooms to your diet.

Lari Laurikkala is a Finnish food enthusiast and a teacher of natural living. He is changing the world one mushroom-eater at a time as the product manager of Four Sigma Foods, a US-based company specializing in medicinal mushroom products.
www.foursigmafoods.com

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Four Sigma Foods is a health food company founded by a group of Finns. Their vision is to bring medicinal mushrooms and adaptogenic herbs to everyday modern life. FSF Instants are easy-to-use, effective mushroom beverages that can be consumed as a coffee-like hot drink. One of their top-selling mushrooms is a dual extracted, wild Chaga. Chaga use fights against unwanted bacteria, viruses and inflammation. All Instants are vegan and free of additives, gluten, lactose, sugar or soy. **www.foursigmafoods.com**

Mycelium Magik – raw, vegan, organic and wild

Wise One Superfood's Mycelium Magik chocolate bar provides a blend of the world's top three medicinal mushrooms: reishi, chaga and Cordyceps. These medicinal fungi offer a wide range of immune system and health-promoting benefits, building your immunity while indulging your senses in raw chocolate. All of Wise One's chocolates are raw, vegan, wild, organic, beyond fair-trade and loaded with the world's top superfoods. Wise One carefully selects only wild, heirloom and organic Criollo Ecuador Cacao, grown in high elevation volcanic soil. Check out other Wise One chocolate at **www.wiseonesuperfoods.com** Enjoy!

GMO Bites Looking forward, looking back

by Lucy Sharratt

As we look back on last year, we thank everyone for all your action and support.

In 2014, we continued to hold back genetically modified alfalfa and even started removing GM sweet corn from stores in Canada. In fact, the grocery chain Metro says, "We are writing a letter to all our suppliers asking for a formal commitment to not sell us GM corn." That's a translation from a French news report on the sweet corn testing that CBAN and Vigilance OGM did this year. We tested 137 samples across the country and only found one GM sweet corn – in a Metro store in Quebec. The French story is here: http://www.laterre.ca/cultures/mais-sucre-un-test-positif-aux-ogm/ We will need to continue our pressure in 2015. For more information and action, see www.cban.ca/corn

Holiday action

BC residents! Your government promised to review the impacts of the GM "non-browning" apple. Sign the petition to get provincial action to stop the GM apple. https://www.change.org/p/norm-letnick-review-the-possible-effects-of-the-gm-apple-on-the-bc-apple-industry

Monsanto paid its CEO $13.4 million in 2014. Donate to CBAN and your charitable gift will be doubled, up to $5,000, thanks to one generous person. CBAN can accomplish so much with your action and support and with way less than $13.4 million. Donate today at http://www.cban.ca/donate

Over 100 groups in Africa are opposing the GM "super banana" funded by the Gates Foundation.

Feeding the world without GM crops

Biotechnology companies continue to sell GM as a solution to world hunger, but here is a bit of what is happening around the world:

Over 100 groups in Africa are opposing the GM "super banana" funded by the Gates Foundation. In a press release, Bridget Mugambe from Uganda, with the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, said, "Just because the GM banana has been developed in Australia and is being tested in the US does not make it super. Ugandans know what is super because we have been eating homegrown GM-free bananas for centuries. This GM Banana is an insult to our food, to our culture, to us a nation, and we strongly condemn it." Read the full statement opposing the US human feeding trials of the GM banana at http://afsafrica.org/afsa-open-letter-opposing-human-feeding-trials-involving-gm-banana/

Farmers in the Philippines continue to protest GM vitamin A "Golden Rice." "Genetically modified rice will not address the lack of vitamin A as there are already many other sources of this nutrient. It will worsen hunger. It will also kill diversification and contaminate other crops." http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/11/filipino-farmers-protest-government-research-on-genetically-modified-rice/ For details on "Golden Rice," check CBAN's factsheet http://www.cban.ca/content/view/full/1895

A recent opinion piece in The Western Producer newspaper argues that GM rice would not address poverty and lack of biodiversity: "The more relevant cause of malnutrition is the loss of agricultural and ecosystem biodiversity. This results from the increasing dominance of large-scale monoculture agriculture and from the widespread use of herbicides, which kill everything else, including nutritious weeds." http://www.producer.com/2014/12/gm-rice-doesnt-address-poverty-lack-of-biodiversity/

Lucy Sharratt is the coordinator at Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN), www.cban.ca

Nature's "Immunologic Scalpel" For Our Toxic World

by W. Gifford-Jones M.D.

Today's stressful life is not kind to our immune systems. Chronic stress triggers the release of pro-inflammatory cytokines which increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and auto-immune disorders such as psoriasis and Crohn's disease.

It's estimated that in North America there are 30 million allergy sufferers. Some people have acute anaphylactic attacks that are life-threatening. But the majority are affected by pollen, animal dander, dust mites in bedding and moulds that collect in showers, window moldings, and damp basements that cause inflammatory reaction in the airways.

To test the effects of stress on healing, researchers compared women who had to care for Alzheimer's patients and those without this stress. Both groups were subjected to a small skin biopsy. The caregivers took 24 percent longer to heal.

Another threat today is exposure to radiation. In addition to X-ray and CT scans we're constantly exposed to home-radiation from cell phones, microwave ovens and transmission towers. Moreover, although television gives off radiation from one station, our bodies receive transmissions from many more stations. And unlike an infection that goes away, radiation never does, accumulating more year by year.

Since no one can live as a hermit, what can be done to bolster immunity from seasonal allergies, fibromyalgia, constant fatigue, aching muscles, prostate problems and rheumatoid arthritis conditions, some associated with pain and inflammation?

Dr. John Wilkinson, Senior Herbal Medicine Lecturer at Middlesex University, London, England, says the answer is plant sterols which, like vitamin C, cannot be made by our body. Studies show that plant sterols reduce inflammation, which helps to decrease the risk of atherosclerosis (hardening of arteries), often requiring by-pass surgery. This is why plant sterols have been called nature's "immunologic scalpel" without the need for surgery.

But consuming sufficient plant sterols is easier said than done. For instance, 3 ounces of unprocessed plant foods contain 4,200 milligrams (mg) of sterols. But after processing it into flour, 90 percent of the sterol is lost! This is hardly a plus for civilization!

If you're not getting sufficient plant sterols, an improved diet is a good start. Research has also shown that regular exercise can bolster the immune system by stimulating the body's natural killer cells.

A natural remedy, Immuno-Care®, available in health food stores, also helps to correct this loss and restore balance to the immune system. One capsule contains 300 mg of plant sterols along with Enzogenol 20 mg, a potent antioxidant and anti-arthritic that contains over 2,000 different antioxidant flavonoids. Antioxidants help to detoxify free radicals, the waste products of metabolism associated with aging. And to assure that they're not destroyed by the stomach's acid they're enteric coated which allows absorption in the small bowel.

The dosage of Immuno-Care is one capsule daily taken 30 minutes before a meal with water or fruit juice. Women who are pregnant, nursing or diabetic should consult their doctor before taking this supplement.

An added benefit is that Immuno-Care, when taken before a meal blocks the intestinal absorption of cholesterol resulting in a decrease in bad cholesterol and an increase in good cholesterol.

If you want to learn more about the incredible benefits of plant sterols look for the new book *Immunity – Thrive in a Toxic World* by Alan Fergusson and Jack Davidson at your local Health Food store.

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Just now an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of Common Ground. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

JR: In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

ET: Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.

JR: And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

ET: Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

JR: At least you're out of denial.

ET: Yes, that's why in the film *A Beautiful Mind*, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form.

Mind over matter

My acupuncturist recently noted she had many patients and friends being diagnosed with cancer. She asked me why I thought there was so much cancer.

I said what I have repeated so often: stress, anxiety, anger and negative thinking suppress the immune system. Cancer is like a terrorist group intent on taking over everything. With weak defenses and no countermeasures, terrorists gain a lot of territory, kill a lot of people and hold many hostage. It would seem cancer does the same thing.

Certainly, exposure to toxins and poor eating habits can be contributing factors. However, we all hear of people who have not taken care of their health and still smoke well into their eighties and yet are still going strong. What makes the difference?

A strong constitution perhaps, but just what is that? I believe it comes down to our "psychological constitution." We don't often see strong, healthy, vibrantly alive people filled with anger, worry and negative thinking.

We are all aware of physical toxins that are harmful to health, but we might not see that habits of mind are equally as toxic. I have written before that tension, anger, worry and negativity suppress the immune system for six to eight hours after we experience them – another six to eight hours each time we have the experience, even if we are just playing it over in our minds. It is easy to see how one could have a constantly suppressed immune system.

> Tension, anger, worry and negativity suppress the immune system for six to eight hours after we experience them.

Scientist say that people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for some kinds of cancers. The immune system plays a role in identifying and destroying cancer cells. The links are clear. In *The Survival of the Wisest*, Jonas Salk identifies aggression, anger and the win/lose mentality as counter evolutionary. Clearly, this is true on a species level as well as on the level of the individual.

A woman I know well was diagnosed a few months ago with incurable cancer that had spread throughout her body. Chemotherapy could extend her life for maybe two years. When I visited her in hospital, she said she would not go through chemotherapy and would just let death happen.

She admitted to having been very negative all of her life, carrying a lot of anger and resentment. She could get herself very agitated and upset with people and situations. Being around her could be very stressful.

She sat home and became very depressed until one day she decided she did not want to die depressed and alone at home. She decided to do chemotherapy and to get out and live. She also decided she would have no negative effects from the chemotherapy. She would lose her hair, that was okay, but she refused to have any other side effects.

She adopted an incredibly positive attitude. She has had three rounds of chemo with absolutely no ill effects. She is full of life, energy, vitality and she is pain-free. Recently, she was out dancing! She has begun to notice how many people are quite negative. She won't be around them.

The beautiful part is that during her three hours receiving chemo she spends the whole time sharing her indomitable spirit and getting the other patients laughing. At the end of the session, there are hugs all around. They all look forward to their next time.

I would not be at all surprised if her incurable cancer goes into remission.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, Deep Powerful Change Hypnosis CDs and new "Creating Healthy Relationships" series, visit www.gwen.ca

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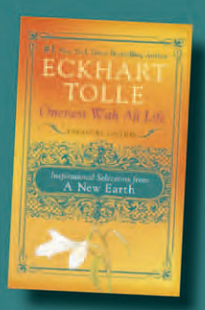

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Clean technology the next wave

by Bruce Mason

In 2012, the National Research Council of Canada's Falcon 20 was the first civil aircraft in the world to fly using 100% biofuel. The fuel was produced from mustard seed by Agrisoma Biosciences of Saskatoon. The jet engines did not have to be modified. (From the documentary *No Carbon Nation,* www.NoCarbonNation.net).

Falcon 20 photo courtesy NRC

Cleantech – the most significant under-reported story of 2014 – might be the best news you receive this year. Unless you are 'Big Oil' or 'Bad Government.' Then it is very bad news, indeed, something you would prefer mainstream media to continue to gloss over, belittle or bury beneath distractions.

Hopefully, you read in alternative media – or picked up the whispers from the corporate press echoed electronically across social media last month – that Canada's green energy sector now employs more folks than the Alberta tar sands!

For those keeping score: 23,700 are currently employed in our nation's burgeoning green energy industry while 22,340 souls toil in the dark satanic mills surrounding Fort McMurray – an area of 140,000 square kilometres, slightly smaller than the state of Florida.

It might be a tad dizzying to continue to keep a tally: 6.5 million people are employed worldwide in cleaner energy and that number is growing exponentially, leaving oilers and frackers in the dust and waste.

That information is contained in a new study from the climate think-tank – yes, we now have these – Clean Energy Canada. It reports that $25 billion has been invested here in the past five years and employment is up 37%.

"Clean energy has moved from being a small niche or boutique industry to really big business in this country," says Merran Smith, director of Clean Energy Canada. Investment since 2009 rivals the combined bucks pumped into agriculture, fishing and forestry combined. For example, investment in the energy-generating capacity of wind, solar, run-of-river hydro and biomass plants has soared by 93%. As a result, experts predict the industry will continue to realize huge growth potential, beyond most other businesses.

Predictably, right wing pundits and think-tanks are saying it can't be so, incessantly mumbling the maddening political mantra that nothing but increasing resource extraction can ensure a stable economy. That scary presumption is finally being definitively challenged by positive action and numbers.

Unlike Céline Bak, who tracks cleantech nationally, most economic observers don't have a handle on what's happening. "We haven't named this as an economic sector in this country; it doesn't have defined status with Stats Canada or the Bank of Canada," reports the president of Analytica Advisors.

Her Ottawa-based company has monitored Canada's expanding clean technology sector for five years. Its 2014 report confirms that not only is the industry broader and deeper than previously thought, it is growing steadily and can simultaneously be a big winner on environmental and economic fronts.

Cleantech shouldn't be confused with 'envirotech' or 'greentech,' popularized in the 70s and 80s as high-flying investment opportunities, then faltering from 2010 to 2013. Subsidies and political support waned as economic woes and initial irrational exuberance morphed into underwhelming investor returns that conspired against it.

> "Clean Technology is one of Canada's first 21st century industries. It has a growing presence in international markets and is bringing economic opportunity across the country," Bak says. "It is growing faster than every other major sector of the economy, directly employing 41,000 people."

Clean technology represents the next wave, providing solutions to such issues as global climate, challenges to resources and the desire for energy independence. New models are emerging, offering competitive returns for investors and customers while providing answers to global challenges. These embrace a diverse range of products, services and processes designed to reduce or eliminate negative ecological impact and improve the productive and responsible use of natural resources.

Bak's analysis comprises 700 companies in 10 sectors across Canada, including *continued p.23…*

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Wind power's come a long way

There's no free ride when it comes to generating energy. Even the cleanest sources have environmental consequences. Materials for all power-generating facilities have to be obtained and transported and infrastructure must be built, maintained and eventually decommissioned. Wind turbines take up space and can harm wildlife. Hydro floods agricultural land and alters water cycles.

That's why conservation is the best way to reduce energy-consumption impacts. Reductions in energy use and investment in energy-efficiency technologies are so significant that the International Energy Agency refers to conservation as the "first fuel."

No matter how good we get at conserving, though, we'll always need energy so we must find ways to employ the least damaging technologies and reduce negative effects. We know the world's preferred and currently cheapest method to generate power – burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas – is the most destructive, causing pollution, global warming and massive environmental damage…

In contrast, wind power doesn't create pollution or global warming emissions, is affordable and will never run out. Improvements to power-generation capacity, efficiency and affordability will continue to boost its importance in the energy mix. But we must ensure turbines are installed in locations and using methods that reduce negative impacts on humans and wildlife.

Wind power doesn't create pollution or global warming emissions, is affordable and will never run out.

Thanks to ongoing research and testing, wind power has come a long way in a relatively short time. Wildlife behaviour studies, along with technological improvements, have significantly reduced harm to birds and bats and better siting has reduced impacts on other wildlife and habitat.

But what about wind power's effects on humans, a key argument used by opponents? Turbines, especially older ones, can be noisy and some people find them unsightly – although I prefer the sight of wind farms to smokestacks and smog. Many problems can be addressed by locating quieter turbines far enough from human habitation to reduce impacts.

As for health effects, a recent comprehensive Health Canada study confirms previous research: Although people report being annoyed by wind turbines, there's no measurable association between wind turbine noise and sleep disturbance and disorders, illnesses and chronic health conditions or stress and quality-of-life issues. A 2013 Australian report concluded people living near wind installations where anti-wind campaigns were active were more likely to report health problems, suggesting some issues may be psychological.

Health Canada says more research may be needed and we shouldn't downplay the annoyance factor. Again, improvements in technology and proper siting will help overcome many problems.

Improvements in grid and storage technologies also mean wind and other renewable technologies are increasingly feasible and desirable, especially as costs continue to drop. Investing in wind and other renewable energy is also good for jobs and the economy and can create greater stability in energy pricing than relying on volatile fossil fuel markets.

To reduce global greenhouse gas emissions at a pace and scale that experts agree is necessary to avoid increasing catastrophic effects of global warming, we need a mix of renewable energy. Wind power will play a large role.

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundations senior editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

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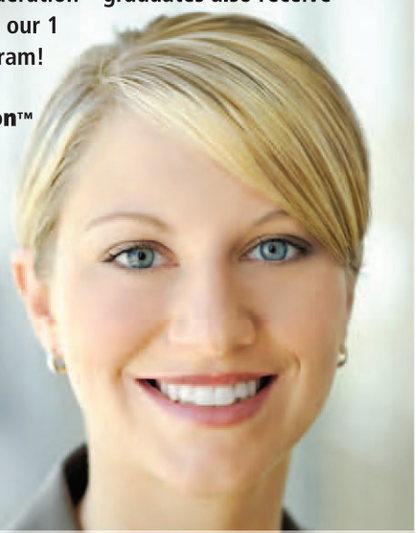

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Reach for better health and well being

Josie and friends promoting Do the Right Thing on the streets of Angeles City, the Philippines

The idea to create an initiative to support women started years ago on the dance floor of a Nairobi nightclub. Friends of mine were telling me stories about how their female friends were dying of AIDS after their boyfriends or husbands brought home the HIV virus. Years later, that observation led to a project in the Philippines we dubbed "Women in Arms" where we distributed condoms in high-risk areas, mainly around the bar district in popular tourist destinations. We called it that to encourage men and women to join arms together and to ask the men visiting there to do the right thing and keep all safe.

Filipina Josie Boclatan would be our first volunteer and she later provided the insight and inspiration for the first Reach Studio of Massage & Well Being in Kitsilano (reachmassage.com). She felt that young women needed an opportunity to have a better life and to do work that was empowering – an alternative to the dangerous, sad life lived in the go-go bars of Asia. Many of these young women have little alternative but to face human trafficking and exploitation in order to support families back in the poorer, home provinces. Especially those ravaged each year by a procession of typhoons.

Josie was the first graduate. We launched our initiative as a pilot in partnership with the Rotary International career college in Dau in the Philippines. After a foundation course in massage training, we would then teach the Reach Therapy technique, an opportunity for graduates to embark on a new career. Our first Reach Studio opened in October of 2014 at 3171 West Broadway in Vancouver.

One career I had really enjoyed was in the healing arts of holistic, osteopathic-style massage. As the owner of Aquae Sulis Holistic Spa (then Aquaterra Beauty & Wellness) in Tsawwassen, I could see how built up tension, tightness and pain – the by-products of modern living – were aging people unnecessarily. These conditions created the need for new knees and hips, robbing people of vitality and the joy of living. We were progressively getting out of alignment, with cascading negative effects.

Our goal is to create a series of studios where we can help people relax and heal, at the same time providing women a career in massage and the unique healing Reach Therapy technique. Our Reach Therapy blends a number of massage techniques and energy work with the understanding of how our modern lifestyle – sitting, working on computers and constant action and stress – bends us latterly out of shape. Our butts, hamstrings and calves tighten from sitting and too little stretching. We abuse our iliotibial bands (IT) through sports and walking, our shoulders roll forward causing neck and back pain and we eventually start to break down. Hips and knees are now wearing out, in part as a result of these conditions. The Reach technique is very relaxing yet at the same time effective at reaching and releasing the deeper tensions in our bodies.

As everyone knows, it takes time and a lot of love to start something new. What we have on our side is the great people of this city, who live with purpose, embrace new healing perspectives and love to share new finds with their friends and family. Word of mouth is growing and every day, more people come to experience our helpful hands that clients say restore their bodies "like nothing else." We are now adding other forms of massage and healing techniques, such as the Ayurvedic Warm Oil massage.

You can help us help by coming and experiencing our Reach holistic massage. Anyone who has trouble sleeping or has body pain or would like to run and engage in sports more easily and with more fluidity will find the experience "life saving." Those are the kind words we hear from our community.

We are humbled and grateful to have begun our journey here, near home, right in the heart of Kitsilano. Drop by!

Peter Ormesher is a former investment banker, turnaround specialist and economic advisor in developing countries. His companies have worked to reduce chemical use in food production and replaced ozone-depleting substances. Originally a native of Toronto, he has spent over half his life in Vancouver and could never leave. Josie is the project manager of the Women in Arms initiative and teaches massage and the Reach Therapy technique to young women in the Philippines.

Peter Ormesher, founder of Reach Studio of Massage

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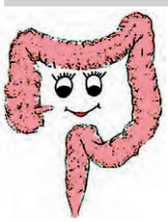

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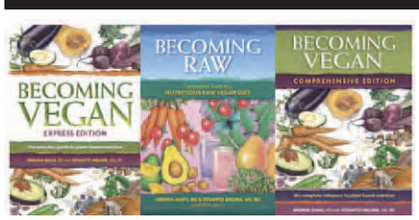

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The last three decades of this century have witnessed the ignition of the most significant internal conflict ever to engage the human species. It is not the struggle between capitalism and communism or between any other set of 'isms'. It is the conflict between those who possess the means and will to exploit the living world to destruction, and those who are banding together in a desperate and last-ditch attempt to prevent the New Juggernaut from trashing our small planet.
– Farley Mowat

...**Cleantech** *from p.16*

Cleantech can be a bit messy. Here, a 300-foot hole is being drilled for a geothermal heat pump. *Photo courtesy the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory.*

renewable energy, water treatment, green building and the development of environmentally friendly consumer products. It is an industry coming of age.

"Clean Technology is one of Canada's first 21st century industries. It has a growing presence in international markets and is bringing economic opportunity across the country," Bak says. "It is growing faster than every other major sector of the economy, directly employing 41,000 people – up six percent from 38,800 in 2011 – and generating $11.3 billion in revenues in 2012."

And there is much more good news, highlighted by the increasing numbers of keen, employed, well-paid young people and the need for more of them, including humanities-related graduates. The industry is producing very high rates of exports while investing $1 billion in research and development – a greater investment than in oil and gas extraction, mining, agriculture, forestry and fishing. It is also much less liable to boom and bust cycles, commonplace in resource extraction.

Bak estimates that, if Canadians recognize and pay attention to cleantech as well as actually creating policy to support it, growth would skyrocket to $32 billion by 2022, employing 120,000. Without policies, cleantech will stall at half that size. Wait too long and the technology, intellectual property, manufacturing and jobs may migrate to greener shores.

photo courtesy the Canadian Wind Energy Association

However, clean energy is still not a priority in Ottawa. "Every major industrial sector in Canada – from the aerospace industry to the oil sands – has gotten off the ground with support from the federal government. But in the clean-energy sector, the federal government is really missing in action," says Clean Energy Canada's Smith.

Four out of five of the largest investors in Canada's cleantech expansion currently come from outside the country. Meanwhile, Stephen Harper and Christy Clark continue to bolster oil sands and natural gas development, western coal exports and proposed oil pipelines and fail to heed the immediate and overwhelming message of climate science that no future stable economy can rely on carbon-intensive development.

Another well recognized Canadian export, Bank of England's governor Mark Carney, recently warned that vast reserves of fossil fuels can't be burned if the world is to avoid catastrophic climate change resulting from a rise in global temperature beyond a dangerous 2° C.

Despite that alarming fact, not only does the oil industry still get more substantial subsidies and tax breaks, it eats up a good deal of the country's politics and diplomatic relations efforts, through the lobbying for the Keystone XL pipeline, for example.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently chided Canada while calling on the country to become more "ambitious and visionary" in dealing with issues like climate change. "Canada is an advanced country; you have many ways to make some transformative changes," he said.

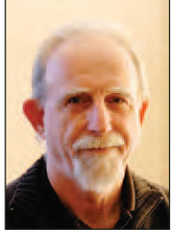
He was also overheard during climate talks in Lima stating, "If climate justice was lightning, then we would surely find Stephen Harper atop a hilltop in a thunderstorm wearing wet copper armour and shouting 'Climate Change is an alarmist hoax.'"

In September, Bak spoke in Vancouver to a forum sponsored by the David Suzuki Foundation, which was opened by Suzuki who stressed that too often Canadian brainpower has fled to other countries. Bak shared the results of her research with a large and enthusiastic audience, followed by a roundtable of local leaders. See the entire presentation at:

http://www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/climate-change/projects/the-cleantech-edge-canadas-fastest-growing-industry-in-the-age-of-climate-change.

Clearly, Canadians excel at cleantech. The sky is the limit. Perhaps one question to ask candidates in the federal election is how much they know about it and what they intend to do to help grow this essential industry. Here at *Common Ground,* we look forward to sharing more about cleantech and invite readers to join in the overdue, game-changing, life-altering conversation.

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of **Our Clinic**. brucemason@shaw.ca



Mac McLaughlin

StarWise

January 2015

WE START the month with some pretty stormy weather. Last month, we talked about the Uranus/Pluto square that is in play until 2019. Uranus/Pluto combinations represent upheaval, revolution and major transformation. Here in the homeland, we worry about the terrorists and their far-flung machinations. We've got the pipeline blues, addictions, crime and all kinds of protestations going on. In the US, the people are upset with the policing policies around shooting kids with BB guns and choking people whose crime was selling cigarettes on the street corner. Here, we shot a man to death for wielding a two-by-four and hardly a whimper was heard. Robert Dziekanski died because he was frustrated and upset and did not know or understand our language. There must be a more compassionate way to handle people that are in distress or psychosis.

Now, back to the January stormy weather. That Uranus/Pluto square is pretty much exact in January and the full Moon on January 4 is in alignment with it. It's a very potent mix and it indicates some type of rough astrological weather, be it in the form of rain, wind, snow, sleet or tears, anger, frustration, aggression and other intense concerns. "What to do?" you might ask? No sense shaking in our boots and wringing our hands with great worry. What we can and must do is strive to find ways to help those who are in distress.

Protesting and demonstrating for what you believe in is a good thing and also healthy for society and the ecology of the planet. But if we throw violence into the mix, we have learned nothing and have gotten nowhere except to create more resentment and barriers to be overcome in the future. The Aquarius new Moon on January 20 heralds excellent opportunities to bring people together in a humane way, in which we can work out a plan that brings benefits to all concerned. We are one people on one planet and we have more likeness than differences, regardless of colour, race or creed.

When my beautiful Master Param Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj visited Vancouver in 1972, he had just cleared customs and when he came out to greet the crowd, many people were crying. A woman approached him and asked, "Why are these people crying"? He responded with one word, "Love." She burst into tears. Love has that effect on all of us and what we need now is love and only love and by the by, our wounds will heal.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.

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KERALA, INDIA | Jan 5 - 11, 2015
SEDONA, ARIZONA | Apr 11-15, 2015
PARIS, FRANCE | July 15-19, 2015

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19
Your solar career house is hot and if you're restless for change, now is the time to make your move. Actually, you might be moved anyway as the stars are indicating a time of shift, shock, change and rearrangement. Know that you will land exactly where you are supposed to land as fate and destiny lend a hand.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21
Travel and career sectors are very active throughout the month. Plus Saturn has moved out of your opposite sign Scorpio, easing the pressure you have been experiencing over the last two years. You can rebuild and re-establish yourself once again. The Sun's a bit brighter and your spark has returned.

GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20
Life might be a tad confusing as Saturn and Neptune cast their energies into your sign. Those born between May 21 and 30 will experience the effects of this planetary combination. The gist of the matter is within making ends meet on the monetary level while establishing some type of spiritual discipline as well.

CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22
The full moon on January 4 will illuminate the areas of your life that need the most attention. There might be quite a bit of tension and a series of shifts will likely occur. It doesn't have to be all that ominous, but changes are in the wind and you must accommodate them.

LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22
Mars and Jupiter oppose each other in the first 10 days of the month. This is a dynamic event as Jupiter is in Leo and Mars is in the opposite sign Aquarius. The sparks fly and the competition heats up significantly. You might be psyched up and ready to do battle. Watch for overcompensation.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22
You might be feeling lethargic as the New Year begins. You get over the hump and break the slump by the middle of the month. At that time, you might be feeling agitated, which will prompt you into action and high gear. Jupiter brings his great blessings and abundance from August 2015 to September 2016.

LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22
The full Moon on January 4 brings a strong effect to the cardinal signs Libra, Capricorn, Aries and Cancer. It brings some type of dynamic energy to the important areas of our lives such as home, family, career and relationships. Those topics will figure strongly as you head into the New Year. Excitement rules the days.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21
Matters related to home and family become significant in the last half of the month. Land and real estate figure in as well. You could become obsessed with family politics. Emotional battles are likely if you push things too far. Career potential is very strong and you might be on the move and feeling aggressive.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21
Saturn is not the best friend to Sagittarius. He puts a damper on your enthusiasm and confidence. He's going to be around for a while so it's probably best to find a way to get on with him. He helps us streamline and correct any type of inefficiency. Career and health topics feature prominently.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19
The full Moon on January 4 brings all types of revelations your way. Just as the king tides bring the water level to the high mark, this full Moon will do the same by bringing important issues to the fore that must be dealt with. Be willing to make changes wherever and whenever.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19
The new Moon on January 20 heralds a new start. Pay attention to the events that come to pass at this time, as there is the likelihood of good to great opportunities possibly manifesting. You might have to rethink the plan and rewrite the script or just plain wait it out until mid-February.

PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20
Mid-January might have its frustrations and limitations that you must bear with. Use it as a time to alleviate negative circumstances. February looks much brighter and you might be thankful for what came to pass in January. Let go of the past and the future will take care of itself. Love is in the air.

Convenient truths, Canadian-made

Naomi Klein's brilliant, best-selling *This Changes Everything* is doing just that – fundamentally altering how we think and act to save life on our planet. We ignore climate change at our own and future generations' peril. Becoming aware of and motivated by what's in this game-changing book is humanity's most hopeful and essential resolution for 2015 – a do-or-die moment.

Find out all you need to know in this big, blue, door-stopper-size publication – arguably the most influential book of our times – or in the reviews, interviews and panel discussions all over the Internet.

Klein's message and subtitle is *Capitalism vs. the Climate.* Her argument is so simple, logical and irrefutable, so indelibly etched in our DNA, that kindergarten kids get it. Forget everything you think you know about global warming, she says. It's not about carbon; it's about capitalism, unfettered and inconsistent with survival, an economic system predicated on infinite growth and endless, senseless, greedy exploitation of obviously limited resources.

What's wrong with us? Why are we failing to address our annihilation? Klein says, "We are stuck because the actions that would give us the best chance of averting catastrophe – and benefit the vast majority – are threatening to an elite minority with a stranglehold over our economy, political process and media."

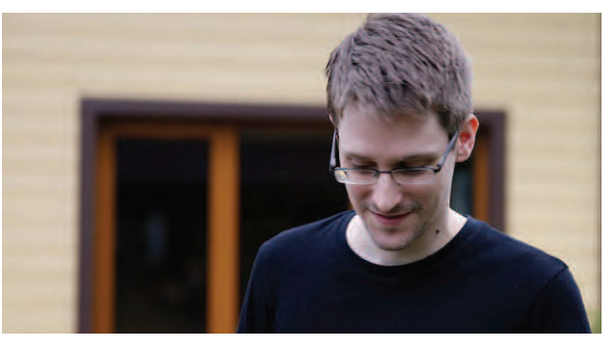
The good news is we can transform this existential crisis into something almost unimaginably better, beyond socialism and assorted utopias. She writes, "Any attempt to rise to the climate challenge will be fruitless unless it is understood as part of a much broader battle of worldviews, a process of rebuilding and reinventing the very idea of the collective, the communal, the commons, the civil, and the civic after so many decades of attack and neglect."

Climate change is above all a global alarm sounding in floods, storms, droughts and fire – including the streets of Ferguson – and obscene, almost unspeakable yet ubiquitous wars, inequality and injustice. *This Changes Everything* is a rallying cry to large numbers of those currently unengaged. Scaring people is "bullshit," says Klein. "We need fear and hope in equal measure. We absolutely should be scared. But fear alone will not mobilize people or it will mobilize them in scary ways."

Scaring people is "bullshit," says Klein. "We need fear and hope in equal measure. We absolutely should be scared. But fear alone will not mobilize people or it will mobilize them in scary ways."

We've all caught glimpses and Klein pieces these and more together in a convincing, exciting, inspiring, visionary weave of healing and reconstruction. A new ideology to fight for, to take the con out of economy, share what's left, fuel the world by renewable energy, declare peace rather than war with the Earth and each other – ecology trumping economy, always.

A key to Klein is a wonderful word: "Blockadia." Use it or lose what refers to fluid, dynamic networks and roving trans-national conflict zones cropping up with increasing frequency and intensity in places such as Burnaby Mountain. Head-on local opposition to extraction. Shouts of "No!" beyond bor- *continued p.26…*



Edward Snowden in *Citizenfour,* a first-hand account of the NSAs surveillance activi*ties.*

FILMS WORTH WATCHING Robert Alstead

State of surveillance

The gulf between what the US government says it is doing and what it is probably doing has never seemed more apparent than in *Citizenfour*. A first-hand account of whistleblower Edward Snowden's revelations in June 2013, it demands us to ask why the National Security Agency's surveillance activities have been allowed to crawl unchecked into so many spheres of our private lives.

The documentary builds like a spy thriller. Director Laura Poitras, who remains behind the camera, describes in voice-over how she initially received an encrypted email from a "senior government employee in the intelligence community" called "citizenfour." She was chosen because of her previous work, in particular her Iraq film, *My Country, My Country*, which landed her on a US watchlist. The exchange leads her to Hong Kong where we meet a youthful Snowden hiding out in a hotel room. Here, we remain for a good part of the film as Snowden unfurls his story to select *Guardian* journalists Glenn Greenwald and later Ewen MacAskill and we begin to understand the enormity of the revelations.

From the outset, Snowden says he doesn't want to be the centre of the story. Yet much of the strength of the film comes from Poitras' portrait of Snowden as a person of integrity and courage. He comes across as calm and collected, albeit, by necessity, hyper-vigilant to eavesdroppers, epitomized by his concern about encrypted passwords or the hotel phone being hacked. In his disclosures, he is almost matter-of-fact. Even passing comments, such as how his NSA colleagues envied the reach of the UK's surveillance system, drop like bombshells. Placed alongside the testimonies of the US intelligence community's top brass that citizens are not being eavesdropped on, the impact is even more explosive.

While the film alights on individual stories as they flash up on news networks like the BBC and CNN, Poitras is more intent on giving viewers a visceral sense of what it was like to be in the room as the big debate surrounding privacy and surveillance starts to rage. In true vérité style, the handheld camerawork is a little rough at times, but befits the clandestine nature of the subject matter. The film ends with Greenwald's tantalizing revelation that Snowden has inspired another major whistle-blower – the details of which are only intimated through handwritten messages on pieces of paper and Snowden's astounded reaction.

Running at three-and-a-quarter-hours, *Winter Sleep*, by Turkish director Nuri Bilge Ceylan, is a long, challenging watch, not made easier by the fact it centres on the complex, but increasingly unlikeable protagonist, Aylin. As the first snows of winter arrive, the outwardly charming Aylin – a former actor and wealthy landowner – becomes a suffocating presence for his beautiful, young wife Nihal and a looming figure of oppression in his community. The barren Anatolian wilderness with its cave-like houses provides an otherworldly backdrop as events slowly unfold indoors. A slow-burner, at times it is in danger of extinguishing itself with subtitled torrents of philosophical verbiage, but then leaps to life with some beautifully observed and quietly tragic scenes.

Robert Alstead is making a BC-set documentary **Running on Climate**. Support is welcome at www.fund.runningonclimate.com

2015 a pivotal year for Internet freedom

One of the most challenging things about working for an Internet freedom organization like OpenMedia is there's often a lot going on. As in a *lot*. It certainly makes for an exciting work life, but I'd be the first to admit it can also make it tricky to take a step back, reflect on the journey to date and look at the bigger picture.

When it comes to 2015, there's a lot in store – it's shaping up to be a pivotal year for digital rights and Internet freedom. Let's look at just some of the key challenges we face:

Affordable Internet and cellphone service

Canadians have long suffered from some of the highest prices in the industrialized world for Internet and cellphone service. Our lack of choice and sky-high prices have held back innovation and our whole economy; 2015 will be a decisive year, with an important auction of key wireless resources and with policymakers at the CRTC poised to rule on three vital decisions on wholesale wireless access to affordable fibre Internet and the future of TV in a digital era.

We're also rallying supporters across the US, Canada and the globe in the ongoing US net neutrality debate about whether to force websites into an Internet slow lane if they cannot afford to pay expensive new fees. Canadians are sure to be affected by the outcome of this debate – you may not live in the US, but many of your favourite websites do and the ruling could set a worrying precedent for the CRTC, which is considering similar issues up here.

Safeguarding Canadians' privacy

2014 was the year when the extent of Canada's privacy deficit became clear. A combination of reckless spy agency surveillance, anti-privacy legislation and lax privacy safeguards at government departments has brought home the size of the task ahead if we're to safeguard our digital privacy.

Given this government's terrible track record, things were going to keep getting worse unless we pushed back.

From *Our Digital Future: a crowdsourced agenda for free expression* (https://openmedia.org/digitalfuture).

So we recently reached out to Canadians to ask what their priorities are when it comes to privacy. We'll be pulling their feedback together into a set of crowdsourced pro-privacy recommendations that we'll publish early this year. And with a massive Privacy Coalition behind us, we can make clear exactly where Canadians stand.

Free expression

2015 is also shaping up to be a crucial year for freedom of expression. Talks on the secretive Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) are intensifying, with US President Obama pushing for a deal as soon as possible. The TPP has sparked huge concern from free expression advocates – we know from leaked drafts that it contains an extreme Internet censorship plan that's been described as a wishlist for Hollywood lobbyists. It could result in entire families getting kicked off the Internet, merely for being accused of copyright infringement. It gets worse: Internet providers could even be forced to remove entire websites from the Internet.

We're pushing back with a Free Expression plan crowdsourced from over 300,000 people across the world that calls for sensible, balanced rules to promote sharing and collaboration online. (https://openmedia.org/digitalfuture)

It's going be quite a year

All in all, the stakes for Internet freedom in 2015 could not be higher. Unless we push back, the Internet we know could become far more expensive, censored and policed. At the end of the day, it boils down to what kind of web we want. Do we want an Internet that works for everyday citizens or one dominated by powerful bureaucracies, be they spy agencies, giant telecom conglomerates or powerful Hollywood lobbyists?

If we want a free and open Internet that works for all of us, we're going to have to fight for it. You can learn more about our work to safeguard digital rights in 2015 at www.openmedia.ca

David Christopher is the communications manager of OpenMedia.ca, a community-based organization that safeguards the possibilities of the open Internet. www.openmedia.ca

*...**ReadIt!** from p.25*

ders and NIMBYism. It's about much more than mere money, and so-called "good jobs." As French anti-fracking activists say: "*ni ici ni ailleurs*" – neither here, nor elsewhere."

Humans can be complicated, competitive, greedy and nasty when called upon by a distorted culture. But also kind, generous and compassionate, when need be. Our innate ability to put collective interest above narrow, financial self-interest is now challenged by an unprecedented responsibility – at once, a huge burden and honour. We can hide our heads in the sand, including tar sands, or under the blankets of a technological, distracted, virtual, unmindful and unfulfilled life.

Surely, to maximize our self-interest is to create a future for maximum benefit. *This Changes Everything* invites us to stop fiddling and to disrobe our free market "leaders" and their great trick and lie about being selfish, that by trying to directly help others, we hurt them.

One of Klein's most powerful ideas is that acting on climate change will address old, long-denied injustices, including indigenous rights. John Ralston Saul – another high-profile, Canadian, public intellectual – has added his voice to this chorus, writing *The Comeback.* In this book, he argues passionately that we must embrace and support aboriginal peoples as the great issue of our time and address this essential missing relationship, central to the building and continued existence of Canada.

At press time, *Common Ground* learned about *Kwe: Standing With our Sisters*, a 100-page anthology edited by Joseph Boyden, featuring more than 50 contributors, including Margaret Atwood, Tom King, Michael Ondaatje, Saul and others. It is intended to raise awareness of the crisis facing Canada's First Nations women. All proceeds from the sale will be donated to Amnesty International's No More Stolen Sisters initiative. It is available in digital format ($2.99) via major online retailers and a limited edition print can be purchased for $10 from the Amnesty International Book Club (amnestybookclub.ca).

Our politicians and corporations aside, Canadians continue to walk the talk. Please share books you recommend as useful tools for making change and breaking the silence in 2015.

NDP committed to proportional representation

by Tom Mulcair

Thomas Mulcair is the leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada as well as the Leader of the Official Opposition in Canada.
thomasmulcair.ndp.ca
thomas.mulcair@parl.gc.ca

In 2015, Canadians will have a choice. Not only will they have the opportunity to elect a new government, but they will also have the opportunity to elect a government that is committed to proportional representation.

We're very clear on this – an NDP government would introduce proportional representation by the next election. Early in December 2014, we introduced a motion to the House of Commons to reform the system before then, but were disappointed that Justin Trudeau voted with Stephen Harper and the Conservatives to defeat the motion. However, the fact that our motion attracted the support of Greens, independent MPs and several members of the Liberal Party who voted contrary to their leader shows we are making progress in our campaign to change Canada's unfair electoral system.

In the last election, Conservatives formed a majority government with only 39% of the vote. In our current first-past-the-post system, they govern as if they have the support of all Canadians, but the fact is 61% of voters wanted someone else in government.

Around the world, advanced democracies have recognized the flaws of this winner-take-all system and have adopted a better model that works.

Democracies such as Germany and New Zealand have embraced proportional representation and realized improvements since moving away from first-past-the-post. In a study that looked at 36 countries with proportional representation, countries that reformed their systems saw increased voter turnout, more women and minorities elected and an overall higher satisfaction with democracy.

Furthermore, countries with proportional representation also score higher on indicators of health, education and standards of living. They are more likely to enjoy fiscal surpluses and have healthier environmental policies, economic growth and decreased income inequality.

> It may seem shocking that a change in electoral system can fuel such dramatic changes, but when you empower people, it's incredible what can be achieved.

It may seem shocking that a change in electoral system can fuel such dramatic changes, but when you empower people, it's incredible what can be achieved.

By responding to and reflecting a broader pool of interests and people, proportional elections lead to governments that are not based on one single partisan worldview or a narrow segment of society. Proportional governments represent a broader cross-section of society; as a result, the policies they pass tend to be more credible, stable and based on the common good.

For years, governing parties in Canada have talked about electoral reform, but have failed to make it a priority. More often than not, those in government are afforded a majority without a plurality of the votes so there is little incentive to change.

That is one of the ways a New Democrat government will be different. Had the 2011 election used proportional representation, despite the NDP's electoral gains, New Democrats would have actually had fewer seats in Parliament. Even still, we believe that democratic reform is critical to improving the health of Canada's democracy. For New Democrats, it's a matter of principle. Proportional representation would better represent Canadians across the country.

Liberals would have seen better representation in the Prairies and even the Conservatives would have been better represented in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. The NDP would have done better in Saskatchewan and the Green Party would have made gains in many places, electing more than just one Member of Parliament.

While Liberals and Conservatives defeated the NDP's motion to bring forward a proportional system this time, the fight is not over. An election is coming. Now it's up to Canadians to get involved, voice their support for better, fairer representation and ultimately exercise their right to vote.

Now it's up to Canadians to make the next election the last unfair election.

Complete text of NDP Motion on Proportional Representation:

"That, in the opinion of the House: (a) the next federal election should be the last conducted under the current first-past-the-post electoral system which has repeatedly delivered a majority of seats to parties supported by a minority of voters, or under any other winner-take-all electoral system; and (b) a form of mixed-member proportional representation would be the best electoral system for Canada."

Information about how each leader and party voted can be found at: http://www.parl.gc.ca/HouseChamberBusiness/ChamberVoteDetail.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=41&Ses=2&FltrParl=41&FltrSes=2&Vote=291

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JAN 10-11
"Unleash Your Gifts" Workshop: A 2-day journey of exploring and extending your hidden genius and passion. In Vancouver. Info/registration: www.planetbliss.ca

JAN 16-18
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Friday Introduction 7:30PM, $10; Course $395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JAN 17
Vision Board workshop With Joseph P. Ghabi: How to Bring Your Desires to Life and Make Them Stick. Vancouver on Saturday 9AM-8PM. Cost $127 + GST. It is more than a Vision Board. For info/registration call 604-221-4469 or email me at blueprintnumerology33@gmail.com

JAN 18
Raw Food Chef Certification! Our fundamental course teaches how to go raw and make delicious meals fast, easy & fun! 8-course meal served! 2-6PM, 2 for $349. Call: 778-839-8424, www.rawfoundation.ca

JAN 24
Daoist Meditation Workshop: Saturday, 10AM-5PM, $55 at Best Western Hotel, 319 North Rd., Coquitlam.
www.MasterShaSoulHealingCentreVancouver.com

JAN 24-25
Victoria Health Show: Pearkes Recreation Centre. Sat: 10AM-6PM. Sun: 11AM-5PM. With keynote speakers Lisa Kilgour, Sam Graci, Brad King & Dr. Julian Whitaker. Adults $8, Seniors/Students $6. Cash/door. Wknd passes available. Tickets/info: www.thehealthshows.com

JAN 24-25
Living from the Heart: Getting Real and Going Deeper with John Catalina. A weekend to explore a life led by your authentic Self by entering a relationship with the Source of All. 10AM-4PM. Contact Aleyona to register 604-354-1534. For details and price, go to www.meetup.com/Events-for-Lightworkers-and-Indigo-Souls-of-Metro-Vancouver.

JAN 25
Adventure into Time and Beyond with Rifa Hodgson presents Intuitive Experiential Workshop – Meet your Personal Spirit Guide, 10:30AM-1:30PM, West Vancouver, Ambleside, rifa@lifebetweenlives.ca, 1-888-606-8463 www.lifebetweenlives.ca/past_life_workshops_events.htm.

JAN 30-FEB 1
Advanced Reflexology Professional Skills Certificate Course: 7PM-10PMFriday, 9AM-6PM Saturday & Sunday. $395.00 + GST per person, includes course notes. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JAN 31-FEB 2
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FEB 3
Free lecture – Gnosis: the Science of True Happiness. 7:15PM at Metrotown (meeting room by Old Navy). For additional upcoming free lectures in 2015, please visit our website. www.agea-gnose.org

FEB 5-7
Yoga for Anxiety, Anger & Depression with master teacher Judith Hanson Lasater. Vancouver, www.soulspringwellness.ca 604-649-8522.

FEB 8
The Art of Fermentation: A workshop with New York Times bestselling author Sandor Felix Katz. Market Square, Victoria, BC. An in-depth exploration of essential concepts and processes from around the world. Registration now open. Info/Registration www.pacificrimcollege.com

FEB 13-15
The Wellness Show: Helping You Find Balance – Exhibits, seminars, cooking, demos, prizes & more. Vancouver Convention Centre, East Building, Exhibit hall B&C. Event info: www.thewellnessshow.com or 604-983-2794.

FEB 13-16
The Matrix Energetics Experience: Attend our free introductory lecture: Feb. 13, 7-9PM. Feb. 13-16 Fundamentals Intensive + ME & Unplugged: Spatial Clairvoyance. Instantaneous and life-long transformation. With Melissa Joy Jonsson and Dr. Richard Bartlett. In Vancouver. Info/Registration: www.matrixenergetics.com

FEB 21-22
T & T Spiritual & Wellness Connections: 4th Annual Psychic & Wellness Fair. Readers/Healers/Vendors & Seminars, Best Western Coquitlam, 319 North Rd. Coquitlam, BC, Sat: 10AM-9PM. Sun: 10AM-4PM. www.tandtvancouver.com/www.facebook/tandtconnections

FEB 22
Adventure into Time and Beyond with Rifa Hodgson presents Past Life Regression Workshop – Rediscover Your Hidden Talents and Gifts. 10:30AM-1:30PM, West Vancouver. Ambleside, rifa@lifebetweenlives.ca www.lifebetweenlives.ca/past_life_workshops_events.htm 1-888-606-8463.

FEB 24-28
5-Day Body Electronics Pointholding Intensive~ Ram Spring Wellness, Salt Spring Island~ Tuition-$550~ Information & Registration- www.wholehealthcentre.com

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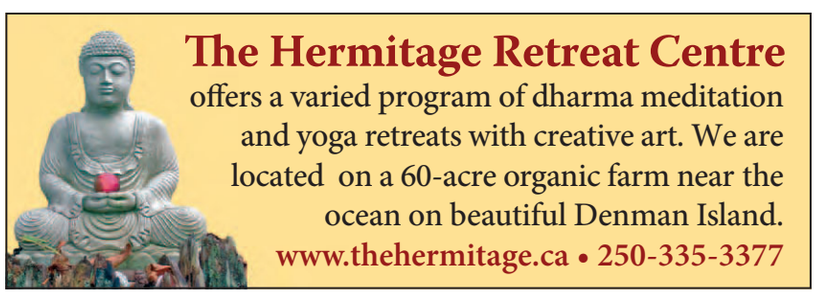
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As LUC would have it

Navigating the law of unintended consequences

by Geoff Olson

Let's hear a laugh for the man of the world
Who thinks he can make things work
Tried to build the New Jerusalem
And ended up with New York
Ha Ha Ha... – Bruce Cockburn, *Laughter*

Murphy's law snarkily asserts that if anything can go wrong, it will go wrong. The law of unintended consequences is its close cousin. LUC crops up with a maddening regularity; it's not a bug in reality, it's a feature.

Roadways and bridges added to transit routes draw greater numbers of vehicles, returning commute times to their original length. Digital devices meant to be timesavers have turned out to be time vampires, compelling us to chase work e-mails at home or on holiday. Computer algorithms used in "high frequency trading" on stock exchanges amplify uncertainty in the market, as pokey humans try to keep up with the unpredictable effects of their digital spawn.

Back in the nineties, US Naval Research invented encryption methods to protect US intelligence communications online. Within a decade, computer scientists were using the same methods to create The Onion Router (TOR) software, named for its multiple layers of encryption. TOR was used by activist groups like WikiLeaks, which invited whistleblowers across the world to securely post information exposing corporate and state corruption.

As Edward Tenner wrote in his 1997 book, *Why Things Bite Back*: *Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequen*ces, "Sometimes things can go right only by first going very wrong." And *vice versa*. It wasn't long before TOR was exploited by criminals to anonymously buy and sell drugs, weapons and stolen identities through "dark web" sites, using the newly hatched digital currency, Bitcoin.

Of course, the Internet itself was spawned by the US military-industrial complex, as was solar panel technology, first conceived for use on US spy satellites.

LUC is particularly evident in the realm of power politics. A recent example is the fallout from the US-NATO program of regime change in Ukraine. Western-supported fascist elements overthrew a corrupt, but democratically elected, government, an event that ethnic Russians in the region correctly interpreted as a coup.

After Crimeans voted yes in a referendum for federation with Russia, the US and EU slapped sanctions on Putin's state for its "invasion" of Crimea and support of the pro-Russian resistance in Ukraine.

In response to western economic sanctions, Russia has signed on to the world's largest energy deals with China. BRICS nations, including Iran and Turkey, are now falling into the orbit of this giant economic bloc. Not the consequence the US was looking for.

The short-term goal of the west is to bleed the economies of Russia, Iran and the socialist petrostate of Venezuela, by flooding the global market with cheap oil. The long-term goal is to destroy a Sino-Soviet alliance and to make Russia capitulate to the US petrodollar and surrender economically and militarily to the US-UK-Israel axis.

This high-stakes chess game with hydrocarbons is sending shock waves throughout the global economy and the resulting political-military tensions may threaten a Third World War.

Combine the predictably depressing behaviour of human beings in groups with the nonlinear, natural forces of the biosphere and LUC goes into overdrive.

"The total system we call the biosphere is so complicated that we cannot know in advance the consequences of anything that we do," observed author Michael Crichton in the foreword to his 2002 novel, *Prey*. "That is why even our most enlightened past efforts have had undesirable outcomes – either because we did not understand enough, or because the ever-changing world responded to our actions in unexpected ways."

Consider the ambiguous history of "cap and trade." Tribal people with some of the world's smallest carbon footprints were displaced after General Motors and two other companies purchased 50,000 acres of Brazilian Atlantic forest, between 2000 and 2002. GM's reason: the companies wanted to offset the emissions of their SUVs in a test case of nature preservation – and the indigenous people were no longer welcome on the land bought up from under their feet.

This form of carbon credit shell game, which does nothing for overall emissions, is not unusual (for more appalling examples, see the 2012 film, *The Carbon Rush*). Rolling Stone correspondent Matt Taibbi has predicted cap-and-trade will become the next commodities bubble after shale gas. If he's proven right, the banksters will be literally pulling profits from thin air.

"The fact that the biosphere responds unpredictably to our actions is not an argument for inaction," observed Crichton. "It is, however, a powerful argument for caution, and for adopting a tentative attitude toward all we believe, and all we do… We think we know what we are doing. We have always thought so. We never seem to acknowledge that we have been wrong in the past, and so might be wrong in the future. Instead, each generation writes off earlier errors as the result of bad thinking by less able minds and then confidently embarks on fresh errors of its own."

From genetically modified organisms to proposals for climate-altering "geoengineering," you can always count on technocrats to promote supposedly planet-saving schemes that conveniently turn a nice profit while introducing entirely new problems.

The road to hell on Earth is paved with good intentions (and grand inventions). Enthusiasts for the American pseudoscience of eugenics believed enlightened breeding programs would hatch taller, smarter, healthier and whiter human beings. We know how well that project went with The Third Reich. Similarly, followers of Karl Marx believed the state would wither out of existence after a global communist revolution. Today, the nation-state is not withering from Marxist-Leninism, but rather the "creative destruction" of corporate capitalism, which compromises the ability of elected representatives to set national objectives.

Even though they were quite prepared to kill one another – and did, in great numbers – Nazis and Bolsheviks regarded themselves as rational people, embracing science over superstition.

It would be nice to believe that given enough time, science and reason will eliminate all our problems. But we will choke on our exponentially growing infoglut in the effort to attain absolute knowledge.

Taoists held that all things have the seed of their opposite within them. This is summed up in their yin-yang symbol, with its black and white forms flowing into one another, a dot of negative space in each. It's a nice graphic shorthand for a mercurial truth that has dogged every empire from the Aegean to the Potomac and every human heart from the cradle to the grave.

"Chaos happens. Let's make better use of it," said Edward Tenner in a 2011 Ted Talk. At the dawn of a new year, I wish you all good LUC.

www.geoffolson.com

Native North America, Vol. 1

It's a privilege to recommend music that ticks all the boxes and adds more. *Native North America (Vol. 1): Aboriginal Folk, Rock, and Country 1966-1985* does just that.

It's a transcendent, stunning, eye-opening compilation of unheard, undocumented, unavailable Canadiana. From original inhabitants across the upper reaches of the continent, it spans languages and cultures – near extinct – which thankfully have now earned their rightful dignity and a more prominent place in our collective soul and history. It's also a revolutionary mix of political testifying, pain, native-language incantations, cross-cultural fusion and reservation-life storytelling.

Sugluk: Regional treasures such as Arctic rockers Sugluk have been preserved in Native North America Vol. 1, including lyrics in Inuktitut.

It's curated by Vancouver DJ Kevin "Sipreano" Howes, who previously produced the much-loved 2006 collection of reggae, Jamaica to Toronto. Howes also worked with Seattle-based, Light in the Attic, the folks who brought us the wonderful Oscar-winning Searching for Sugarman.

Fifteen years in the making, Vol. 1 comprises 34 tracks on three LPs – with 120 pages of brilliant, meticulous, comprehensive and illuminating liner notes, artist interviews, compelling archival photos and lyrics – or two CDs in a 60-page package. It's a vital, almost-lost legacy and inspiring foundation – beautiful, tragic, impassioned, bold, honest and unflinching.

It's been reviewed simultaneously in various Vancouver media, music mags, blogs, the Guardian, CBC and Rolling Stone, which raves, "… rings with brilliant garage-rock fuzz, pedal steel-laced heartache, singer-songwriter Earth love, radical politics, wah-wah heroism and the occasional lyrics in Inuktitut."

Like an adept archaeologist, the insatiably curious and fiercely dedicated Howes unearthed fascinating clues to aboriginal culture in obscure, homegrown, regional vinyl. "I started digging through flea markets, record and thrift stores, driving back and forth between Vancouver and Toronto, to remote places, wanting to learn more," he recalls.

"It was like immersing myself in a degree in aboriginal studies, looking for forgotten small releases, then literature, in archives and libraries. There's almost nothing on the Internet so I went right to the source, to the artists themselves, producers, family, sometimes making requests through community radio stations in native languages."

The stories he heard and shares include the likes of Willie Thrasher, robbed of family and heritage by the residential school system, resiliently rediscovered and celebrated in We Got to Take You Higher, members of Sikumiut living on the streets of Montreal and Willy Mitchell, shot in the head by a trigger-happy cop – for which he received a meagre $3,000 settlement – after friends had taken lights from a Christmas tree.

It's a remarkable cross-section of diversity. From The Chieftones – "Canada's All Indian Band" – which opened for The Beach Boys a week before Pet Sounds was released, to Sugluk, an Inuit band from just outside the Arctic Circle. It includes Arctic garage rock from northern Quebec, melancholy Yup'ik folk from Alaska and hushed country blues from the Wagmatcook First Nation reserve in Nova Scotia. There are echoes of Velvet Underground, Hank Williams, Bob Dylan and the Beatles, spread by radio, word of mouth and vinyl to far corners, including First Nations, injected with Native consciousness, storytelling, poetry, history, ceremony and pride.

Re-mastered in Vancouver by Greg Mindorff – 13 tracks were buried in CBC vaults, threatened by Stephen Harper – Howes says the essential compilation scratches the surface. "The music has as much meaning and relevance today, if not more so with land claims, rights and environment issues. It's timely and just the beginning. We're sending it out to libraries and cultural centres and now there's something on Google and YouTube."

Ask for *Native North America (Vol. 1)* at independent record stores or order it from http://lightintheattic.net/shop A companion set featuring the US and Mexico is currently in production.

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of **Our Clinic**. brucemason@shaw.ca

The Ballad of Crowfoot

Willie Dunn – where to start? He passed on before it was completed, but the spirit of Willie Dunn soars through *Native North America (Vol. 1): Aboriginal Folk, Rock, and Country 1966-1985* from the stage-setting *I Pity the Country* to the dedication, in memoriam.

If the terms "Renaissance Man" and "national treasure" still mean something, they certainly apply to this Mi'kmaq and Scottish/Irish descendent. A singer/songwriter, filmmaker, poet, playwright and one-time NDP political candidate (1993), Dunn created Canada's first music video – and one of our best – The Ballad of Crowfoot.

He was awarded a UN medal for service in the Congo during a three-year Army stint, set Shakespeare and T.S. Eliot to native drumming and chants and recorded the full-length albums, Willie Dunn, The Pacific, Metallic and Son of the Sun. And he's reported to have whispered into the Queen's ear during her 1971 visit to BC, "We are not your children any more."

His film credits include *These Are my People*, *The Other Side of the Ledger: An Indian View of the Hudson's Bay Company*, *The Eagle Project*, *The Voice of the Land* and *Self-Government.* His music includes the soundtracks for *Incident at Restigouche,* about a 1981 police raid and *Okanada*, documenting the 1990 Oka, Quebec, standoff.

The Ballad of Crowfoot belongs in the pantheon of protest ballads, in the company of Buffy Sainte-Marie's Universal Soldier or Neil Young's Ohio. Dunn was reclaiming a voice for native people, he said, because optimism and hope hadn't brought change.

Set against his impassioned performance, the NFB film juxtaposes archival photos and footage with newspaper clippings, exposing brutally inhumane, unjust treatment. It earned seven international awards, including a Gold Hugo (best short film, 1969 Chicago International Film Festival). *The Ballad of Crowfoot* was screened in schools across Canada and Kevin Howes, who credits the experience as an ongoing inspiration, is among those who will never forget it.

Wonder why Canada's First Nations are Idle No More? Everyone in this country deserves to spend the 10 minutes at https://www.nfb.ca/film/ballad_of_crowfoot

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